



Phase II and Phase III Archeological Database and Inventory

Site Number: 18MO379

Site Name: E.J. Chiswell Fm Complex Ruins

Prehistoric ☐

Other name(s)

Historic ☒

Unknown ☐

Brief Description:

late 18th-20th century farmstead

Site Location and Environmental Data:

Latitude 39.1824 Longitude -77.4472

Elevation 112 m Site slope 0

Site setting

-Site Setting restricted

-Lat/Long accurate to within 1 sq. mile, user may need to make slight adjustments in mapping to account for sites near state/county lines or streams

Maryland Archeological Research Unit No. 12

SCS soil & sediment code

Physiographic province Eastern Piedmont

Terrestrial site ☒

Underwater site ☐

Ethnobotany profile available ☐ Maritime site ☐

Nearest Surface Water

Name (if any) Unnamed tributary of Poto

Saltwater

Ocean ☐

Estuary/tidal river ☐

Tidewater/marsh ☐

Minimum distance to water is 92 m

Freshwater

Stream/river ☒

Swamp ☐

Lake or pond ☐

Spring ☐

Temporal & Ethnic Contextual Data:

Paleoindian site ☐

Woodland site ☐

Archaic site ☐

MD Adena ☐

Early archaic ☐

Early woodland ☐

Middle archaic ☐

Mid. woodland ☐

Late archaic ☐

Late woodland ☐

Unknown prehistoric context ☐

Contact period site ☐

ca. 1820 - 1860 ☐

ca. 1630 - 1675 ☐

ca. 1860 - 1900 ☐

ca. 1675 - 1720 ☐

ca. 1900 - 1930 ☐

ca. 1720 - 1780 ☐

Post 1930 ☐

ca. 1780 - 1820 ☐

Unknown historic context ☐

Unknown context ☐

Ethnic Associations (historic only)

Native American ☐

Asian American ☐

African American ☒

Unknown ☐

Anglo-American ☒

Other ☐

Hispanic ☐

Y=Confirmed, P=Possible

Site Function Contextual Data:

Historic

Urban/Rural? Rural ☐

Domestic

Homestead ☒

Farmstead ☒

Mansion ☐

Plantation ☐

Row/townhome ☐

Cellar ☐

Privy ☐

Industrial

Mining-related ☐

Quarry-related ☐

Mill ☐

Black/metalsmith ☐

Furnace/forge ☐

Other ☐

Transportation

Canal-related ☐

Road/railroad ☐

Wharf/landing ☐

Maritime-related ☐

Bridge ☐

Ford ☐

Educational

Commercial

Trading post ☐

Store ☐

Tavern/inn ☐

Military

Battlefield ☐

Fortification ☐

Encampment ☐

Townsite

Religious

Church/mtg house ☐

Ch support bldg ☐

Burial area

Cemetery ☒

Sepulchre ☒

Isolated burial ☐

Bldg or foundation ☒

Possible Structure ☐

Post-in-ground ☐

Frame-built ☒

Masonry ☒

Other structure ☐

Slave related ☒

Non-domestic agri ☐

Recreational ☐

Midden/dump ☐

Artifact scatter ☐

Spring or well ☒

Unknown ☐

Other context ☐

Interpretive Sampling Data:

Prehistoric context samples

Soil samples taken ☐

Flotation samples taken ☐

Other samples taken ☐

Historic context samples

Soil samples taken ☐

Flotation samples taken ☒

Other samples taken ☐



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Diagnostic Artifact Data:

Projectile Point Types	
Clovis	<input type="text"/>
Hardaway-Dalton	<input type="text"/>
Palmer	<input type="text"/>
Kirk (notch)	<input type="text"/>
Kirk (stem)	<input type="text"/>
Le Croy	<input type="text"/>
Morrow Mntn	<input type="text"/>
Guilford	<input type="text"/>
Brewerton	<input type="text"/>
Otter Creek	<input type="text"/>
Koens-Crispin	<input type="text"/>
Perkiomen	<input type="text"/>
Susquehanna	<input type="text"/>
Vernon	<input type="text"/>
Piscataway	<input type="text"/>
Calvert	<input type="text"/>
Selby Bay	<input type="text"/>
Jacks Rf (notch)	<input type="text"/>
Jacks Rf (pent)	<input type="text"/>
Madison/Potomac	<input type="text"/>
Levanna	<input type="text"/>

Prehistoric Sherd Types

Marcey Creek	<input type="text"/>	Popes Creek	<input type="text"/>	Shepard	<input type="text"/>	Keyser	<input type="text"/>
Dames Qtr	<input type="text"/>	Coulbourn	<input type="text"/>	Townsend	<input type="text"/>	Yeocomico	<input type="text"/>
Selden Island	<input type="text"/>	Watson	<input type="text"/>	Minguannan	<input type="text"/>	Monongahela	<input type="text"/>
Accokeek	<input type="text"/>	Mockley	<input type="text"/>	Sullivan Cove	<input type="text"/>	Susquehannock	<input type="text"/>
Wolfe Neck	<input type="text"/>	Clemson Island	<input type="text"/>	Shenks Ferry	<input type="text"/>		
Vinette	<input type="text"/>	Page	<input type="text"/>	Moyaone	<input type="text"/>		
				Potomac Cr	<input type="text"/>		

Historic Sherd Types

Earthenware		Ironstone	<input type="text"/>	Staffordshire	<input type="text"/>	Stoneware	
Astbury	<input type="text"/>	Jackfield	<input type="text"/>	Tin Glazed	<input type="text"/>	English Brown	<input type="text"/>
Borderware	<input type="text"/>	Mn Mottled	<input type="text"/>	Whiteware	70	Eng Dry-bodie	<input type="text"/>
Buckley	<input type="text"/>	North Devon	<input type="text"/>	Porcelain	46	Nottingham	<input type="text"/>
Creamware	2	Pearlware	<input type="text"/>			Rhenish	<input type="text"/>
						Wt Salt-glazed	4

All quantities exact or estimated minimal counts

Other Artifact & Feature Types:

Prehistoric Artifacts	
Flaked stone	<input type="text"/>
Ground stone	<input type="text"/>
Stone bowls	<input type="text"/>
Fire-cracked rock	<input type="text"/>
Other lithics (all)	<input type="text"/>
Ceramics (all)	<input type="text"/>
Rimsherds	<input type="text"/>
Other fired clay	<input type="text"/>
Human remain(s)	<input type="text"/>
Modified faunal	<input type="text"/>
Unmod faunal	<input type="text"/>
Oyster shell	<input type="text"/>
Floral material	<input type="text"/>
Uncommon Obj.	<input type="text"/>
Other	<input type="text"/>

Prehistoric Features

Mound(s)	<input type="text"/>	Storage/trash pit	<input type="text"/>
Midden	<input type="text"/>	Burial(s)	<input type="text"/>
Shell midden	<input type="text"/>	Ossuary	<input type="text"/>
Postholes/molds	<input type="text"/>	Unknown	<input type="text"/>
House pattern(s)	<input type="text"/>	Other	<input type="text"/>
Palisade(s)	<input type="text"/>		
Hearth(s)	<input type="text"/>		
Lithic reduc area	<input type="text"/>		

Lithic Material

Fer quartzite	<input type="text"/>	Sil sandstone	<input type="text"/>
Jasper	<input type="text"/>	Chalcedony	<input type="text"/>
Chert	<input type="text"/>	Ironstone	<input type="text"/>
Rhyolite	<input type="text"/>	Argilite	<input type="text"/>
Quartz	<input type="text"/>	Steatite	<input type="text"/>
Quartzite	<input type="text"/>	Sandstone	<input type="text"/>
European flint	<input type="text"/>	Basalt	<input type="text"/>
Unknown	<input type="text"/>	Other	<input type="text"/>

☒ Dated features present at site

Numerous features containing diagnostic historic artifacts

Historic Artifacts	
Pottery (all)	222
Glass (all)	441
Architectural	1090
Furniture	<input type="text"/>
Arms	4
Clothing	6
Personal items	2
Tobacco related	<input type="text"/>
Activity item(s)	51
Human remain(s)	<input type="text"/>
Faunal material	<input type="text"/>
Misc. kitchen	131
Floral material	<input type="text"/>
Misc.	482
Other	<input type="text"/>

Historic Features

Privy/outhouse	<input type="text"/>	Depression/mound	<input type="text"/>	Unknown	<input type="text"/>
Const feature	<input type="text"/>	Well/cistern	<input checked="" type="text"/>	Burial(s)	<input type="text"/>
Foundation	<input checked="" type="text"/>	Trash pit/dump	<input type="text"/>	Railroad bed	<input type="text"/>
Cellar hole/cellar	<input type="text"/>	Sheet midden	<input checked="" type="text"/>	Earthworks	<input type="text"/>
Hearth/chimney	<input type="text"/>	Planting feature	<input type="text"/>	Mill raceway	<input type="text"/>
Postholes/molds	<input type="text"/>	Road/walkway	<input checked="" type="text"/>	Wheel pit	<input type="text"/>
Paling ditch/fence	<input type="text"/>				

All quantities exact or estimated minimal counts

Radiocarbon Data:

Sample 1:	<input type="text"/> +/- <input type="text"/> years BP	Reliability	Sample 2:	<input type="text"/> +/- <input type="text"/> years BP	Reliability	Sample 3:	<input type="text"/> +/- <input type="text"/> years BP	Reliability
Sample 4:	<input type="text"/> +/- <input type="text"/> years BP	Reliability	Sample 5:	<input type="text"/> +/- <input type="text"/> years BP	Reliability	Sample 6:	<input type="text"/> +/- <input type="text"/> years BP	Reliability
Sample 7:	<input type="text"/> +/- <input type="text"/> years BP	Reliability	Sample 8:	<input type="text"/> +/- <input type="text"/> years BP	Reliability	Sample 9:	<input type="text"/> +/- <input type="text"/> years BP	Reliability

☐ Additional radiocarbon results available



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External Samples/Data:

Collection curated at MAC

☐ Additional raw data may be available online

Summary Description:

Site 18MO379 is a late 18th-20th century site encompassing the remains of the historic Edward J. Chiswell farmstead near Poolesville, Maryland. A concentration of standing farm structures is present at the site along with a historic stone wall, all located on level to sloping terrain along a finger ridge east of the Potomac River in Montgomery County. Within the site's boundaries there is an improved spring that provides water for the modern Chiswell Farm complex. It appears that this spring has served as a water source for the site's occupants since its initial settlement by whites (and probably prehistorically as well). The present farmhouse is built of Seneca sandstone and frame and is a well-preserved example of Montgomery County's late 18th century to late 19th century rural vernacular residential architecture. Its oldest section is the northern part, which appears to have been built during the late 1700's. Two Seneca sandstone additions and a frame addition were constructed between that time and the late 19th century. Other standing structures associated with the Chiswell House include a small fieldstone outbuilding, barn, utilitarian outbuildings, and 20th century structures. Soils at the site are grouped under the Penn-Lewisberry soil association.

The site was first identified during a Phase I survey for the planned Montgomery County Site 2 Landfill. This study was conducted in 1991 as part of the county's transition from a traditional landfill-centered waste disposal system to a waste-to-energy based program. Currently, Montgomery County disposes of their waste by burning it at extremely high temperatures, and then using the heat to generate energy as either electricity or steam. This reduces the volume of the trash by nearly 90% leaving only ash and metals. The metals are then removed via a magnet and recycled reducing waste further. Currently the ash waste is shipped by rail out-of-county for disposal in landfills. However, in 1991, as the county's extant Oaks landfill built in 1982 was nearing the end of its use-life, plans for the disposal of the ash that would be generated in the new plant led to the purchase of a large tract (including Site 18MO379) for the construction of a new landfill. While this landfill has still not been constructed, the Montgomery County governments purchased the needed property for the landfill's eventual construction and currently lease it for tenant farming. All archeological research was conducted in anticipation of state permitting and possible Army Corps of Engineers wetlands permitting that will eventually be required whenever the construction project is realized.

Following its initial discovery, the site was investigated by non-systematic surface search. That reconnaissance found that there were substantial archeological remains present in the northern portion of the site associated with the E.J. Chiswell Farm. The most visible archeological features here were the ruins of destroyed farm outbuildings at least one of which appeared to be contemporaneous with the late 18th century occupation of the Chiswell House. Other archeological materials were evident at this locale in the form of ceramic, glass, and metal objects visible on the ground surface. None of these artifacts were collected at this time, but the pattern of refuse disposal characteristics at other site of this type and vintage indicates that subsurface trash pits and privy pits were likely to be present or close to such a farm complex. In the southern portion of the site was a fence built of fieldstone laid up without mortar. During the surface search, several artifacts were collected in this area, including 1 porcelain sherd, 1 whiteware sherd, 1 earthenware sherd, and 3 coal fragments. The artifacts were widely dispersed and those recovered were not considered archeologically significant, thus it was only the northern portion of the site (near the main farm complex) that was recommended for Phase II work.

Researchers returned to the site in 1993 to conduct the Phase II testing. As part of that research project, extensive archival study was conducted to place the site in its proper historical context. Archival research revealed that one Carlton Belt applied for a warrant in 1786 to resurvey several tracts that he held title to and incorporate any contiguous vacant lands into a single consolidated tract. This was a common practice at this time, shortly after the Revolutionary War, when large parcels of land lay abandoned by British loyalists who moved out of the American colonies into territories still a part of the British Empire. When completed, Belt's survey had recorded the metes and bounds of a parcel amounting to 760 acres which he named "The Whole Included".

A 1783 tax assessment, just prior to Belt's resurvey (when he was 39), indicates that he lived in a log dwelling on a 200 acre tract that he owned called "Gore's Adventure" along with 3 white inhabitants, 6 slaves, 26 horses, and 50 head of cattle. Besides the log dwelling he lived in, Belt also owned 2 log tobacco houses, and 2 small houses on this tract alone. However, by the time of the 1800 Census, he was listed as head of a household comprising 10 free whites and he owned 40 slaves (in addition to his extensive land holdings). One of Carlton Belt's children was Carlton Belt Jr., who was born in 1776. It is his residence on the southern portion of "The Whole Included" that is the earliest documented occupation in the vicinity of 18MO379. It is clear that he occupied the property because his father's 1802 will precisely described land boundaries for a parcel of 100 acres that he willed to Carlton, Jr., and stated that his son had previously established his plantation there.

In a 1798 tax assessment, Carlton Belt, Jr. was listed as a married head of household, indicating that he was living separately from his father's household (although residing on land still owned by his father). It is reasonable to estimate that he established his farm around 1795, when he was 19 years of age. There is little information concerning the structure that existed on the property during the residence of Carlton Belt, Jr. The 1802 will of Carlton Belt mentions the "plantation" where his son resided and the "still house spring". Since the only known spring on that 100 acre parcel is the one near the extant farm buildings (see above), it appears likely it was the location where Carlton Belt, Jr. resided. No descriptive information for the buildings on his plantation appears to have survived. By 1807, Carlton Belt Jr. sold the 100 acre parcel that had been willed to him by his father only 5 years prior, along with some additional land. He sold a total of 115 1/8 acres to a Charles Willson, who was less than 23 years old. The parcel then was sold, resold, and combined with other parcels several times until it was purchased as part of a 134 acre tract in 1822 by Henry W. Talbott for \$25.00 per acre.

Talbott's ownership from 1822 to his death in 1859 corresponds with the interpreted range of the construction date for the oldest (northern) part of the standing Chiswell House. That section appears to have been built around the same time as two stone outbuildings on the property. Early tax assessments of the property show a greater than 50% increase in the assessed value of the property between the assessment made in 1825 and the one made in 1831, suggesting probable improvements made to the property. During the 1830's Talbott purchased a substantial amount of additional land surrounding the site. By the end of the decade, according to an 1839 assessment, he had assembled a tract totaling 523 acres. In the 1850 Census, Henry W. Talbott was listed as a farmer who was 62 years of age. His wife, Sarah, was 57. Residing with him were two sons (Henry O. Talbott, 25, and Jonathan Talbott, 19). The value of his real estate was recorded as \$8,000 and the tax assessment for that year listed five slaves with his total personal property valued at \$2,378. Henry W. Talbott died in 1859. His eldest son, Henry O. Talbott continued to operate the family farm during the Civil War until 1866 when the family was finally able to settle Henry W's estate. In 1866 Henry W. Talbott's heirs sold 359 acres, including the farm at 18MO379, to Edward Jones Chiswell and Evelina W. Chiswell (his wife) for \$14,362.50.

During the American Civil War, Maryland was a border state and its citizens served in both the Union and Confederate armies. Edward J. Chiswell was one of the residents of northwestern Montgomery County who left the area to serve in the Confederate Army. He was from a family that had settled in the Poolesville



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late 18th-20th century farmstead

Unknown ☐

area during the 18th century. Following the war, Edward returned to the area, got married, purchased the farm from Henry W. Talbott's heirs, and followed a career in farming. Edward J. Chiswell lived on the farm from the time of its purchase in 1866 until his death in 1906. He was a prominent farmer and served as a Justice of the Peace. Tax assessments, land records, and census records indicate that Chiswell and his wife had several children and that several adult African-Americans (and their children) lived with them on the farm, employed as household servants and farm workers. The records also indicate increases in the value of the farm property indicating the probable construction of a bank barn around 1875, and numerous other improvements between 1876 and 1886. This may have been the period when the Chiswell House was remodeled to include a frame Victorian style second story and attic built atop the previously existing one story masonry section lying between the northern and southern sections of the house. In 1904, Edward J. Chiswell and Evelina W. Chiswell sold their farm to their son Thomas F. Chiswell, and his wife Eloise Wooton Chiswell who held the land until 1932. The property then changed hands several times until it was purchased by the Montgomery County Government in 1995.

During the Phase II study, Site 18MO379 was examined through a systematic surface inspection and collection using transects spaced at 7.62 meter (25 ft) intervals. Visibility was good because much of the terrain investigated was bare earth. That was followed by the excavation of 55 shovel test pits (STPs) using a systematic sampling interval of 15 meters. STPs were no less than 30 cm in diameter and were excavated to the depth of natural subsoil by natural/cultural levels. Four 2 X 2 m excavation units were subsequently excavated. The excavation units were dug by natural/cultural levels. All soils (both STPs and the excavation units) were screened through hardware cloth. The first excavation unit was excavated at a subsurface structural feature in the northern part of the site identified during shovel testing. Test Unit 2 was excavated adjacent to the standing barn ruin near the site's southern limit. Test Unit 3 was placed alongside the southern wall of the small stone outbuilding located on the west side of the Chiswell House. Test Unit 4 was excavated to investigate a stone foundation feature a short distance north of Test Unit 3.

The surface collection and shovel testing revealed that the greatest amounts were found on terrain close to existing and former structures. The four 2 X 2 meter test units provided the most useful data concerning subsurface archeological features and the dating of structures at the site. The cultural remains encountered in them provided evidence demonstrating the presence of significant archeological materials at 18MO379. Test Unit 1 was excavated at the presumed doorway of a rectangular 6 m X 4.5 m foundation evident both at the surface level and in STPs. The test unit was found to contain a rock masonry foundation wall that extended to 55 cm below the surface. The rocks were dry laid and included both cut and natural rock. During the excavation an intrusive dog burial was encountered just outside the foundation. The overall assemblage is indicative of a domestic function for the building that was once located there. The artifacts recovered here included ceramic wares of late 18th to early 19th century vintage. The presence of hand-painted French porcelain is indicative that at least some of the occupants of the structure were of elevated social status as it was quite expensive to obtain in comparison to wares with more widespread use. No other ceramic fragments of that ware were found elsewhere at 18MO379. The material from Test Unit 1 appears to be associated with the occupation of the site by Carlton Belt, Jr. who built his farmstead there sometime between 1795 and 1798. While the historical record indicates that Belt and his family did not live luxuriously, he came from a well-to-do family and the French porcelain may be explained as a wedding gift. The cultural deposit encountered at Test Unit 1 proved to be a significant source of archeological information. It indicates that other cultural features associated with the site's late 18th century occupation are likely to be preserved also.

Test Unit 2 was excavated to investigate the construction details and vintage of the standing bank barn foundation ruin at that location. Excavations around the foundation revealed that the rock masonry walls of the barn were constructed on top of a concrete footing. The test unit recovered numerous examples of 20th century artifacts from the fill within the builder's trench that extended to the base of the foundation footing. These findings show that the barn foundation wall had been constructed during the middle 20th century and should not be considered historically significant.

Test Unit 3 investigated the builder's trench associated with the stone outbuilding situated on the western side of the north end of the Chiswell House. It was placed adjacent to the eastern wall, which appears to be the oldest part of the structure. The outbuilding's construction details are similar to the oldest (northern) section of the Chiswell House and may be contemporaneous. The builder's trench discovered in Test Unit 3 contained diagnostic ceramics dating to the first quarter of the 19th century. The function of the structure is difficult to ascertain with the limited amount of data obtained, but it is interesting that a chamber pot fragment was encountered. This structure was likely built during the period from 1800-1825 during the period when the property changed hands in rapid succession prior to Henry W. Talbott's ownership which began in 1822. The owners during this period were Carlton Belt Jr. (until 1807), Charles Willson (from 1807 to 1815), and Daniel Trundle (from 1815 to 1822).

Test Unit 4 was excavated 4.5 meters north of Test Unit 3. It was situated to investigate a partially exposed stone foundation feature. It contained a complex stratigraphy that included a burial stratum of plaster and mortar fragments 12 cm below the surface. The stone foundation was revealed to be of superficial construction, consisting of a single layer of rock laid into the soil of the test unit's silty loam soil stratum. The foundation enclosed a brick floor one brick in depth and artifacts recovered from the builder's trench adjacent to it included wares from the first half of the 19th century. The structure that existed here previously appears to have been contemporaneous with the stone outbuilding at Test Unit 3, though the chronological span of the artifacts encountered indicates that it is likely to have been built at a later date.

Historic artifacts encountered during the Phase II excavations included 51 activity items, 1,090 architectural artifacts, 6 clothing objects, 576 kitchen-related artifacts, 2 personal items, 4 arms-related items, and 479 miscellaneous objects. The activity items were 5 terra-cotta potsherds, 18 pieces of automobile glass (headlamp, etc.) and 28 farm tools and parts. The architectural artifacts were 72 brick fragments, 104 pieces of mortar and plaster, 18 pieces of cement/concrete/asphalt, 131 sandstone & slate fragments, 6 pieces of bluestone, 214 pieces of window glass, 478 nails (cut and wire), 35 spikes and other hardware fasteners, 8 pieces of asbestos siding and tar paper, 10 pieces of miscellaneous hardware, and 14 pieces of porcelain/tiles/ceramic plumbing pipe. The clothing items were 5 buttons and buckles, and one pin/fastener. Kitchen-related artifacts consisted of 218 ceramic sherds (2 creamware, 1 Iberian coarse earthenware, 69 whiteware, 45 porcelain, 1 yellowware, 67 redware, 4 white salt-glazed stoneware, 8 black stoneware, 19 gray stoneware, 2 brown stoneware), 227 glass fragments (6 pre-1870 bottle shards, 180 post-1870 bottle shards, 41 pieces of table glass), 1 fork, 127 pieces of animal bone, and 3 fragments of shell. The personal items were a piece of mirror glass and the handle of a whiteware chamber pot. The 4 arms related objects were ammunitions casings. And finally, the miscellaneous objects were 56 ferrous metal fragments, 19 non-ferrous metal fragments, 268 pieces of coal, and 136 burnt objects.

In addition to the historic period cultural materials recovered from 18MO379, several prehistoric lithic tools and debitage fragments were also collected. These artifacts appear to be peripheral to prehistoric site 18MO370 (see synopsis report), which adjoins the western boundary of 18MO379. The 43 lithic artifacts included a non-diagnostic corner-notched projectile point, 2 point fragments, 2 bifaces, 2 utilized flakes, 22 debitage flakes, and 14 pieces of shatter. Most of the material was quartzite, followed by quartz, and rhyolite. The material was widely distributed and was encountered in disturbed soil contexts and no prehistoric cultural features were encountered. The site's prehistoric component is, therefore, considered to be insignificant.

The Phase II investigation demonstrated the presence at 18MO379 of intact subsurface features with diagnostic artifact concentrations containing



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archeological remains associated with the late 18th century to 20th century settlement of the Chiswell Farm. Of particular interest are the possible remains of the late 18th century Carlton Belt Jr. plantation house encountered in Test Unit 1 and the remains of later (early 19th century) improvements to the farm in Test Unit 3. The content of the site has provided information important to documenting the early settlement history of the Chiswell Farm. Further study of this site could provide information significant to the early history of rural settlement and agricultural development of western Montgomery County.

External Reference Codes (Library ID Numbers):

00006233, 00006290